



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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April 9, 2001

TO:

FROM:

Stephen J. Demczak, Senior Reclamation Specialist

Sm for Steve

RE:

Mill Fork Canyon/Indian Creek Exploration, PacifiCorp, Deer Creek Mine,
1594-EX01B

SUMMARY:

PacifiCorp proposes to drill up to a total of seven (7) coal exploration holes in the Mill Fork Coal Lease Tract: ML-48458. The purpose for drilling is to assess coal characteristics and seam thickness. The holes will be drilled using a helicopter transported drill rig in accordance with the Mill Fork Canyon/Indian Creek application for the Notice of Intention of Conduct Minor Coal Exploration. Less than 250 tons of coal will be removed.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS:

COAL EXPLORATION

Regulatory Reference: R645-200.

SCOPE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.1; 30 CFR 772.10; 30 CFR 772.11; R645-100-400; R645-200-100; R645-200-200; R645-201-100.

Analysis:

PacifiCorp has submitted information to address the requirements of the state program and to meet requirements of R645-200 through R645-203.

Findings:

TECHNICAL MEMO

The information given is to address the requirement of State program and R645-200 through R645-203. The information that was submitted is complete but not necessarily adequate until a review of each regulation is made within this document.

REQUIREMENTS FOR NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONDUCT MINOR COAL EXPLORATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.10; 30 CFR 772.11; R645-100-412; R645-201-200.

Analysis:

R645-201-221; The coal rule requires the applicant to give name, address, and telephone number of the applicant's representatives, who will be present at and responsible for conducting the exploration operations.

R645-100-400, R645-200-100, R645-200-200, and R645-201-100; Energy West Mining has given a Notice of Intention to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration with a narrative and map describing the exploration area and indicating where the exploration will occur.

The permittee will transport drilling equipment and materials by helicopter. Personnel will access the sites by vehicle using existing roads and on foot. The drill sites will be relatively level (20 percent or less). There will be no removal of vegetation such as grasses and trees, but dead-fall and some taller shrubs (mahogany) or aspen trees will be removed for safety reasons.

The drill site will not be greater than a 40 feet by 40 feet area. Brattice or other similar material will be placed on the ground beneath the drill rig. Minor digging, using hand tools may be necessary to level the drill rig using wood block or other materials.

A maximum of one hundred pounds of coal will be removed per drill hole. This will be achieved by drilling a three inch diameter hole. Upon completion, the drill hole will be sealed with cement from the bottom of the hole to ground level.

The exploration will start on July 15, 2001 and end on or near September 15, 2001.

Findings:

The applicant has given all of the necessary information as requirements of R645-201-221 such as name, address, and telephone number.

The permittee has submitted the necessary information to comply with regulations

R645-100-400, R645-200-100, R645-200-200, and R645-201-100 in the analysis.

COMPLIANCE DUTIES

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-100.

Analysis:

Energy West will not substantially disturb the natural land surface while conducting the exploration of the seven coal exploration sites. The drill hole sites will be located in areas of nearly level ground thus requiring minimal leveling. Drilling equipment and material will be helicoptered to the sites and placed on brattice cloth or other comparable material. The permittee will remove little or no vegetation.

Findings:

The information submitted complies with the requirements of R645-202-100.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-200; R645-301-800.

Analysis:

R645-202-200; Energy West Mining will not substantially disturb the land surface and will remove less than 250 tons of coal.

Findings:

The information submitted meets the requirements of R645-202-200.

OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

TECHNICAL MEMO

Roads

R645-202-232; Energy West Mining will use existing U.S. Forest Service Development Roads. These roads are #245, #040 and #17/221. The permittee will also obtain a Road Use Permit which contains a bond in case the roads are damaged.

Topsoil

R645-202-233; No topsoil will be removed as mentioned. Energy West will place all drilling equipment and materials on a brattice cloth and level the drilling rig with wood materials.

Diversions of Overland flows and streams

R645-202-234; No overland flows and streams will be effected.

Hydrologic Balance

R645-202-235; The hydrologic balance will not be effected by using this method of exploration.

Acid- or toxic forming materials

R645-202-236; During the drilling operation, water and drilling fluids will be recirculated to the extent possible. Any returned cuttings and other material will be captured in a container at the drill site. The cutting material will be transported from the drill site to the staging area by helicopter and then by vehicle to the Deer Creek or Cottonwood Waste Rock Sites for disposal.

If spills occur, all affected material will be removed from the site and disposed of at an approved location. If soil is removed during spill containment and clean-up, the site of removal will be reconstructed and seeded with the approved seed mixture.

Findings:

The information given is found to meet the requirements of the R645 Minor Coal Exploration performance/operational standards.

RECLAMATION STANDARDS

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.13; R645-202-240.

Analysis:¹

Approximate original contour

R645-202-241; The drill site areas will be basically flat with no major excavation occurring. Minor shoveling may be needed for leveling the drill rig. The area will be at approximate original contour.

Revegetation

Only minor surface disturbances are expected from the drilling activities. All surface disturbance will be repaired and re-seeded using hand tools. The proposed seed mixture does not meet the requirements of the regulations and must be changed. Mr. Robert Thompson (USDA, Forest Service, Manti LaSal Forest) botanist, was contacted on February 21, 2001 and we discussed changing the seed mixture to:

Basic Mix	# seeds/ft ²	PLS lbs./acre
Columbia needle grass (<i>Stipa columbiana</i>)	15	4.5
Slender wheatgrass (<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>)	15	4.5
Sandbergs bluegrass (<i>Poa secunda</i>)	15	0.75
Pacific aster (<i>Aster chilensis</i>)	<u>12</u>	<u>0.2</u>
Total	<u>55</u>	<u>9.75</u>
Supplement *		
Sulfur flower (<i>Eriogonum umbellatum</i>)	10	2.0
Rocky Mountain penstemon (<i>Penstemon strictus</i>)	<u>10</u>	<u>0.75</u>
Total	<u>20</u>	<u>2.75</u>

*Seed should be purchased in individual seed packets, not as a mixture.

The basic mix contains more aggressive erosion control type species and should be used to seed any areas where erosion could potentially become a problem. The supplements are less aggressive wild flowers that are important for diversity and maintaining non-game animal species and should be seeded alone and in areas where erosion is unlikely. The supplements are more expensive seed but for the purpose of this drilling program only a tenth of an acre of seed may need to be ordered.

Boreholes

R645-202-243; Groundwater is not anticipated to be encountered; however, if ground water is present it will be reported to (SITLA, USFS, and DOGM) and a determination will be made regarding the modification of the drill hole to a monitoring well.

TECHNICAL MEMO

Upon completion of the drill hole, the drill hole will be completely sealed with cement from the bottom of the hole to ground level.

Facilities and Equipment

R645-202-244. thru R645-202-244.300; All drilling equipment and materials will be removed from the drill area once drilling is completed. Sealing will start thereafter and all equipment and material for sealing drill holes will be removed when sealing is completed.

Findings:

The requirements of this section of the regulations are considered adequate in regard to the R645-202-241.

Information provided in the proposed Drilling Plan is not considered adequate to meet the requirements of this section. Prior to approval, the Operator must provide the following in accordance with:

R645-202-242.100, The seed mixture and seeding methods as outlined in the revegetation section above must be incorporated into the Notice of Intent (will be submitted as a condition and the permittee has consented to this).

The requirements of this section of the regulations are considered adequate in regard to the R645-202-243.

The permittee has complied with the requirements of the Coal Rules R645-202-244. thru R645-202-244.300.

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION

Regulatory Reference: 30 CFR 772.15; R645-203.

Analysis:

The Division will have a copy of the Notice of Intent to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration at the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining office.

Findings:

The Division will have a copy of the Notice of Intent to Conduct Minor Coal Exploration at the Division of Oil, Gas and Mining office.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Amendment C/015/018-EX01B is considered adequate providing that PacifiCorp receives an approval from US Forest Service for using their roads and grounds. Also, PacifiCorp must receive permission from SITLA to do exploration on Mill Fork Coal Lease Tract: ML-48458.

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